

Jeff Capeci  
Judith DeStefano  
Paul Lundquist  
Deborra Zukowski



## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

### Minutes

The Charter Revision Communications Ad Hoc Committee met on Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2016 in Council Chambers of the Newtown Municipal Center. Committee Chairman Judith DeStefano called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Present: Mr. Lundquist, Ms. Zukowski, Mr. Capeci, Ms. DeStefano

Meeting began with Public Forum – there were approximately 8 people present. Committee went through slide presentation and responded to questions. Two community members reiterated their concern in respect to potential consequences they believe will result should Question One (BOE minority representation) be passed. Public forum concluded at 8:30.

VOTER COMMENT: None.

MINUTES: MR. LUNDQUIST MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 9/22/16, MS. ZUKOWSKI SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR.

### NEW BUSINESS

Committee reviewed forum slides and made minor adjustments (attached). Note to add contact information on last slide. Deck will be converted to PDF and posted to town website under Charter Revision. Video will be posted on town website and if possible to Facebook page. Comments made during forum on Question One concerns will be communicated to Town Counsel.

With no further business, Mr. Capeci motioned to adjourn at 8:45 pm and Mr. Lundquist seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Judith DeStefano,  
Chairman, Charter Revision Communications Committee



Newtown Legislative Council

# Charter Revision Communications Committee

## PUBLIC FORUM

Tues, Sept 27, 2016



COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Judit DeStefano  
Deborra Zukowski  
Jeff Capeci  
Paul Lundquist

Email: [NewtownCharterRevision@gmail.com](mailto:NewtownCharterRevision@gmail.com)

On Facebook: Newtown CT Charter Revision

To review all Charter revisions as proposed:  
Go to the Town website ([newtown-ct.gov](http://newtown-ct.gov)).

Under Boards and Commissions,  
click on Charter Revision Commission

First Selectman's Office: (203) 270-4201

# Overview of the Revision Process

- July 2014 - Charter Revision Commission (CRC) was appointed by the Legislative Council (LC); charged with reviewing and revising the existing town charter.
- CRC recommended changes to the LC in Fall of 2015.
- Changes were approved by LC, will be voted on **November 8**.
- Proposed changes presented to the voters in **two** ballot questions.
  - Independent outcomes



# Today's Forum

- Overview of the Revision Process
- BoE Political Party Representation
- Budget Referendum Questions
- Other Proposed Changes to Budget Processes
- Elimination of Town Meetings
  - Impact on Appropriation Processes
  - Impact on Real Property Acquisitions and Dispositions
- Call to Action
- Questions



# QUESTION 1

SHALL THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF MEMBERS FROM ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY PERMITTED TO SERVE ON THE SEVEN (7) MEMBER BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL NOT EXCEED FOUR (4), (THE CURRENT CHARTER PROVIDES THAT THE LIMITATION IS FIVE (5) MEMBERS FROM ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY)?



# BoE Political Party Representation

- 7<sup>th</sup> BOE seat added in 2007
- State statute mandates minority political party representation minimum of 2 - allows town charter to increase the minority minimum
- Impetus for 4/3 vs 5/2 discussion
  - BoE request
  - Community confusion at 2008 ballot for charter revision
- Potential tradeoff between number of candidates running and the balance of the two parties on the Board of Education



# QUESTION 2

SHALL THE REMAINING CHARTER AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON NOVEMBER 18, 2015 BE APPROVED NOTWITHSTANDING THE RESULTS OF QUESTION NUMBER 1 ABOVE?

Remaining proposed amendments include changes to:

- Town Budget and Related Processes
- Elimination of Town Meeting and Implications
- Real Property Processes
- Restructuring and Other Non-Substantive Changes



# Budget Referendum Questions

## Existing Charter

*“Do you deem the proposed sum of \$\_\_\_ to be appropriated for the Board of Selectmen as ‘too low’?”*

*“Do you deem the proposed sum of \$\_\_\_ to be appropriated for the Board of Education as ‘too low’?”*

## Proposed Charter

*“If the proposed sum of \$\_\_\_ for the Board of Selectmen is not approved, should the revised budget be higher?”*

*“If the proposed sum of \$\_\_\_ for the Board of Education is not approved, should the revised budget be higher?”*





# Other Proposed Changes to Budget Processes

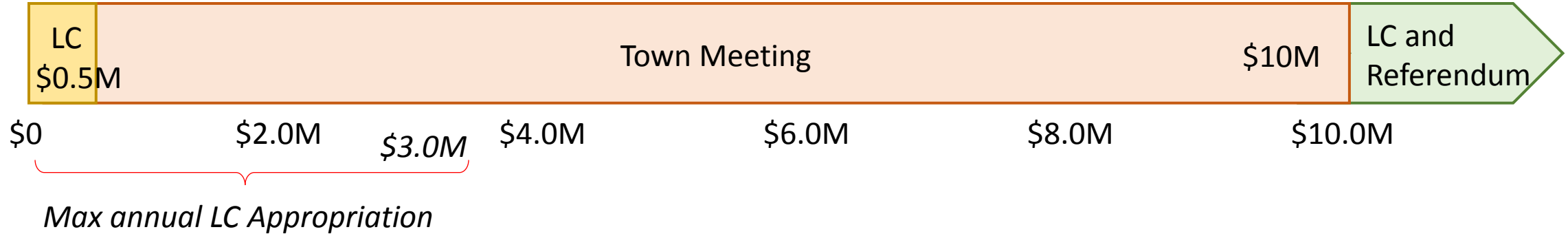
- Budget Referendum Processes have been codified
  - In the event of failed referendum, Legislative Council must confer with the Board of Selectman and the Board of Education for changes in their respective budgets
  - Legislative Council shall also request updated financial recommendations from the Board of Finance
- Amended budgets must be publically available after voter approval



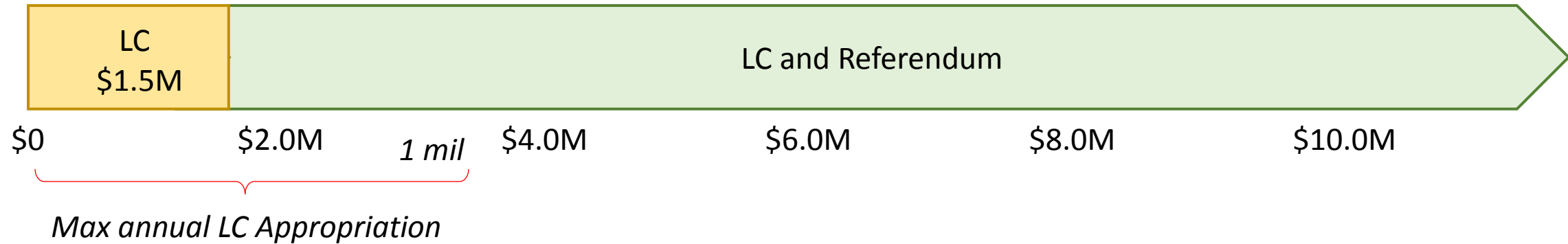
# Elimination of Town Meetings

## Impact on Appropriation Processes

### Approval levels and methods provided in **current charter**



### Approval levels and methods provided in **proposed charter**



Right of Referendum [section 7-100 of current charter and section 3-25 of proposed charter] 5% of currently registered voters.

# More on appropriations...

- If approved, voters will cast a yes/no vote for each specific appropriation on the Referendum Ballot in April.
  - Appropriations in excess of the limit that are prohibited by timing or other factors from appearing on the ballot will warrant a special referendum.
- Language for appropriations changed from “per item” to “per purpose.”



# Town Meetings since Jan 1, 2013\*

## Appropriations of \$1.5M and less (If accepted, would be approved by LC)

Date	Time	Topic	Amount	Attendance	Vote (Y/N)
6/22/2016	7:15 PM	Improvements to High School Roof	\$1,402,500	14	10/0
4/18/2016	6:45 PM	Sidewalks to Reed	Unstated (Grant/Funds Available)	9	Unanimous
8/17/2015	7:00 PM	Acquisition/Replacement of fire apparatus	\$975,000	58	Unanimous
8/17/2015		Newtown Hook & Ladder House	\$1,500,000	58	Unanimous
7/6/2015		Road Improvements	\$1,000,000	91	Passed by show of hands
11/18/2013	7:16 PM	Amendment of 9/16/2013 Dickinson Park Playground	\$866,112	29	Unanimous
9/16/2013	7:15 PM	Dickinson Park Playground (includes \$336,162 donations)	\$774,162	22	Unanimous
7/24/2013	7:02 PM	Sandy Hook School design/planning (CT grant)	\$750,000	~160	Unanimous
7/24/2013	7:02 PM	Treadwell Artificial Turf	\$500,000	~160	Unanimous

\* Source: [http://newtown-ct.gov/Public\\_Documents/NewtownCT\\_SpecialTownMeetingMin/](http://newtown-ct.gov/Public_Documents/NewtownCT_SpecialTownMeetingMin/)



# Town Meetings since Jan 1, 2013\*

## Appropriations of more than \$1.5M (If accepted, would be approved by LC)

Date	Time	Topic	Amount	Attendance	Vote (Y/N)
4/18/2016	7:00 PM	Amendment of 2/26/2014 Hawleyville Sewer	Total of \$3,800,000	9	Unanimous
8/17/2015		Demolition /Remediation at FFH	\$5,000,000	58	Most/1
7/6/2015	7:15 PM	Newtown High School Auditorium	\$3,600,000	91	Passed by show of hands
2/26/2014	7:02 PM	Hawleyville Sewer Project	\$2,800,000	109	81/11
3/20/2013	7:00 PM	Hawley Boiler/HVAC	\$1,550,000	10	Unanimous

\* Source: [http://newtown-ct.gov/Public\\_Documents/NewtownCT\\_SpecialTownMeetingMin/](http://newtown-ct.gov/Public_Documents/NewtownCT_SpecialTownMeetingMin/)



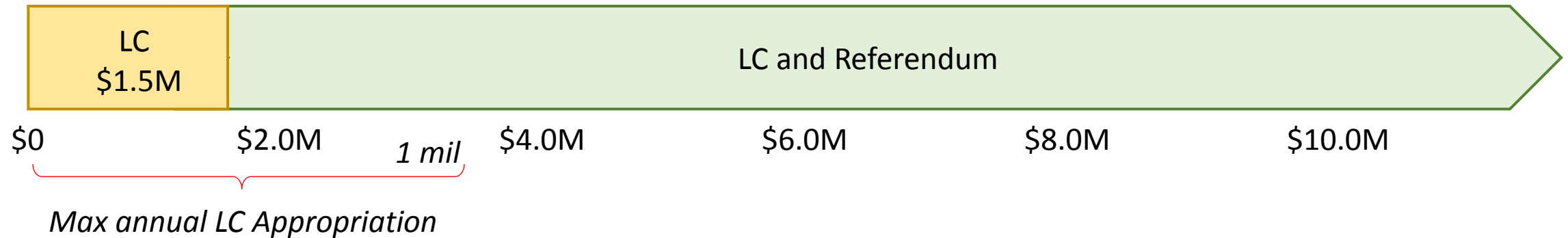
# Elimination of Town Meetings

## Impact on Real Property Acquisitions

Approval levels and methods provided in current charter



Approval levels and methods provided in proposed charter



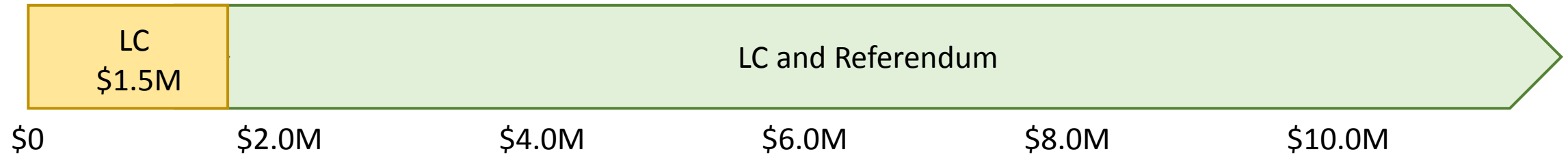
# Elimination of Town Meetings

## Impact on Real Property Dispositions

Approval levels and methods provided in current charter



Approval levels and methods provided in proposed charter



# Town Meetings since Jan 1, 2013\*

## Real Property Dispositions

Date	Time	Topic	Amount	Attendance	Vote (Y/N)
10/5/2015	7:27 PM	Property: Lot line revisions	NA	6	Unanimous
2/17/2015	7:16 PM	Demolition of 36 Yogananda St. House	NA	10	Unanimous

### Additional requirements provided in the proposed charter for real property disposition

#### Decision requirements

- Majority of Board of Selectmen
- Majority of Planning and Zoning Commission + majority of Legislative Council  
or at least 8 members of the Legislative Council to override Planning and Zoning

#### Required information sources

- Appraisal
- All boards and commissions having an interest in the property

\* Source: [http://newtown-ct.gov/Public\\_Documents/NewtownCT\\_SpecialTownMeetingMin/](http://newtown-ct.gov/Public_Documents/NewtownCT_SpecialTownMeetingMin/)





# Other Proposed Changes to Real Property Dispositions

- Sealed bid removed as method of disposition
- Private sale mirrors current private real estate practices
- Highest offer requirement may be waived for offers consistent with a desired purpose the town has for a property, provided buyer makes a binding commitment to conform to the purpose
- Leasing of real property is specifically provided for



Tell your friends to...



ANY  
QUESTIONS  
?

**Please Take  
a Pamphlet  
or Two!**

**Thank You**

